

have to borrow across the water to pay for your military? What kind of Social Security can we afford with a \$10 trillion debt? What kind of domestic policy?

The administration is charting a course that will be the end of us if we do not have a regime change on the second of November.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. WICKER. Mr. Speaker, on rollcall vote Nos. 457–465, I was unavoidably absent. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

On Nos. 457–461, “no”; on Nos. 462–463, “yea”; on No. 464, “no”; on No. 465, “yea.”

EXCHANGE OF SPECIAL ORDER TIME

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to claim the time of the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. WICKER).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

WORLDWIDE TERRORISM

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BURGESS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, just a few hours ago in this House, we were addressed by the Prime Minister of the country of Iraq, Dr. Allawi. Dr. Allawi came to this body to speak to us here. He wanted to deliver a message. He wanted to deliver a message of success that we are indeed succeeding in the country of Iraq. He came here to enumerate three principles.

He wanted to tell America thank you, thank you for giving us our country back. He wanted us to know that Iraqis knew that the world indeed is better off with the regime change that occurred in Iraq and that America did the right thing.

He also wanted us to know that they were working and would continue to work to make certain that they, the government of Iraq, got it right on the ground in Iraq. It has not been easy. It has not been without a price; and Dr. Allawi allowed that as America has mourned its losses, they have mourned their losses in Iraq as well. But this is the cost of freedom.

As Harry Truman once said, If you want peace, you better be ready to fight for it.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. Allawi also talked about elements of defeatism that creep into conversation and how pernicious that defeatism is. He pointed out that within the past year's time, within the country of Iraq a Constitution has been adopted, a Constitution that provides

for majority rule but respects the rights of the minority. He pointed out how the handover occurred at the end of June as it was scheduled to. It, in fact, occurred 2 days early and sovereignty was returned to the country of Iraq.

He also pointed out that the Iraqi assembly met in that country and over 25 percent of the participants of that assembly were women, an event that was unprecedented prior. He pointed out that the elections will be held in January of next year, and with that, the completion, the turnover to sovereignty will be complete.

Mr. Speaker, he also pointed out that indeed, Iraq currently is the battlegrounds for those who are opposed to freedom. But, of course, Iraq is not the only battleground as we know all too well in this country.

Mr. Speaker, this past weekend I had the opportunity to travel to Moscow. The purpose of that visit with some other Members of Congress to visit with the children in the Federal Pediatric Hospital in Moscow. Children who had been present in the Beslan School Number One on the first day of school of this year.

This is Alan standing here with me. Alan is 11 years old and attended school that day only to find that there were people in the world who were capable of such an astonishing degree of hatred and cruelty that it left the rest of the world speechless. In fact, it is not known how many died in the gymnasium that day in Beslan, Russia, 300, perhaps more, over half of them children. And that has not been the only story in the country of Russia during this past month.

They have lost two planes and they had the bombing of a metro station in downtown Moscow. All in all, 500 deaths or more in the last 4 weeks in the country of Russia.

But, Mr. Speaker, what really moved me, what really tore at me was, again, the astonishing cruelty of these people who would direct their hatred towards an innocent individual like young Alan.

Mr. Speaker, Alan's mother called me back into his hospital's room after we took this picture and said, I want you to see what they pulled out of my son's chest. And here, Mr. Speaker, is a piece of metal that Alan had surgically removed after he came to the hospital in Moscow. It is of junk. It is a piece of metal that came from a landfill or a junkyard, but it is a small piece of metal as you can see. And these mines were packed full of metal this size so they would get maximum dispersion and cause maximum injury, inflict maximum pain on the most innocent members of society.

Mr. Speaker, let us not forget what we are up against. Let us not forget what the cost is in this global war that we are engaged in at this time. Let us not forget what we are fighting for. We are fighting for the innocents. The innocent in Iraq. The innocents in this

country and, indeed, the innocents in Russia.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. CONYERS addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MEDICARE PREMIUMS INCREASE FINANCES TO HMOS AND DRUG COMPANIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BROWN of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, the Bush administration recently announced that America's seniors will pay 17.4 percent more for Medicare coverage next year. It is no accident that they announced this piece of information late in the afternoon on Friday of Labor Day weekend. They simply hoped nobody would notice. But the largest premium hike in Medicare's history, the largest premium hike in the 38 years of Medicare is the sort of news you just cannot suppress. One senior advocate called it a hidden tax on seniors.

That hidden tax on seniors is a multi-billion dollar tax at that. That is big news and it is bad news for President Bush. But when faced with bad news, the Republican spin machine does what it always does. It tries to shift the blame. It is the Democrats, they said, President Bush rolled out his ad plan knowing this would happen, it is the Democrats that are responsible for the premium hike, even though the Republicans control the House, the Senate and the White House. But because that did not jibe with the facts, no one bought it then and no one buys it now.

Before the Bush Medicare bill became law, the nonpartisan Medicare trustees estimated that Medicare monthly premium would increase \$2 in 2005. After the Bush Medicare bill became law, the premium jumped to \$11.60.

□ 2030

Hence, the 17.4 percent increase. Those are the facts. No amount of sweet talk, misdirection, or spin from the Bush team can change those facts; but rather than take responsibility, the Bush team just changed its spin again. This time they said the premium, the record-setting 17.4 percent increase, the Bush administration says was a good deal for America's seniors because it financed new preventive benefits. Again, there are a few things the Bush administration did not tell us.

They forgot to say that the preventive benefits account for less than one-fourth of 1 percent of the premium increase. In other words, virtually nothing in the premium increase really